

## Men Who Have Sex with Men

Although estimates vary, men who have sex with men (MSM) are estimated to represent about 7% of the male population in the United States (Lieb et al., 2011; Purcell et al., 2012). However, MSM continue to account for the majority of people infected with HIV in the United States. In 2010, MSM accounted for 78% of new HIV infections among U.S. men (CDC, 2015) and an estimated 56% of persons living with an HIV diagnosis (CDC, 2015).

A higher percentage of MSM are living with HIV disease, therefore, as a group, MSM have an increased chance of being exposed to HIV (CDC, 2015). MSM are also at higher risk for acquiring HIV because anal sex is the riskiest type of sexual intercourse for contracting or transmitting HIV. Because MSM, on average, have more sexual partners compared to other men, there are more opportunities to acquire or transmit HIV (CDC, 2015).

Homophobia, stigma, and discrimination place MSM at risk for multiple physical and mental health issues and may affect whether MSM seek out and are able to obtain high-quality health services (CDC, 2015). In Illinois, many non-profit organizations provide HIV prevention and care services targeted to meet the needs of MSM (Illinois HIV Care Connect, 2015).

### HIV Disease Diagnoses

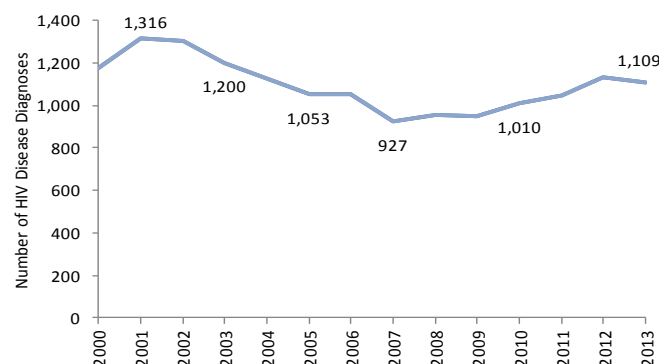
As seen nationally, the majority of new HIV disease diagnoses in Illinois have occurred among MSM. From 2009–2013, 5,047 MSM were diagnosed with HIV disease, accounting for 72% of all new HIV disease diagnoses where a transmission risk category was reported.\* An additional 203 new diagnoses or 2.9% of all new HIV disease diagnoses with identified transmission risk factor were men who reported injection drug use (IDU), in addition to being MSM.\*\*

\*9,002 new HIV diagnoses were reported in Illinois from 2009–2013; 1,955 had no transmission risk category reported

\*\*Subsequent numbers for MSM reported in this section include MSM and MSM who are also IDUs

The number of new HIV disease diagnoses among MSM fluctuated from 2000–2013, from a high in 2001 of 1,316 new diagnoses to a low of 927 new diagnoses in 2007. Since 2010, there have been over 1,000 new diagnoses of HIV among MSM annually in Illinois.

**Figure 1. HIV Disease Diagnoses among MSM by Year of Diagnosis, Illinois, 2000–2013**

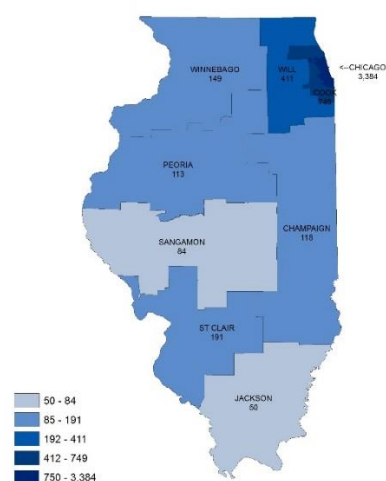


Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### Geography

The majority of MSM (65%) in Illinois diagnosed with HIV disease from 2009–2013 resided in the City of Chicago (n=3,384). Cook County, excluding Chicago, had the next highest number with 749 new HIV disease diagnoses among MSM.

**Figure 2. HIV Disease Diagnoses among MSM by Region, Illinois, 2009–2013**

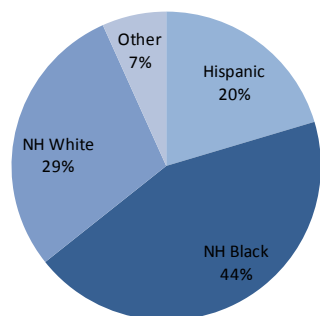


Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### Race/Ethnicity

Among MSM, the highest proportion (44%) of new HIV disease diagnoses in Illinois from 2009–2013 were among non-Hispanic (NH) black men. NH black MSM face additional risk factors including: greater risk of being exposed to HIV as sexual partners tend to be other men of the same race in a population with higher HIV prevalence; lack of awareness of HIV status; and socioeconomic factors such as limited access to and use of quality health care (CDC, 2014a).

**Figure 3. HIV Disease Diagnoses among MSM by Race/Ethnicity, Illinois, 2009–2013**

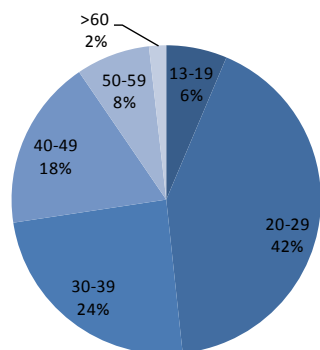


Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### Age at Diagnosis

Young MSM are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection. Nationally, in 2011, among adolescent males aged 13–19 years, approximately 93% of diagnosed HIV infections were from male-to-male sexual contact (CDC, 2014c). Young adults aged 20–29 years accounted for 42% of new diagnoses among MSM in Illinois from 2009–2013.

**Figure 4. HIV Disease Diagnoses among MSM by Age at Diagnosis, Illinois, 2009–2013**

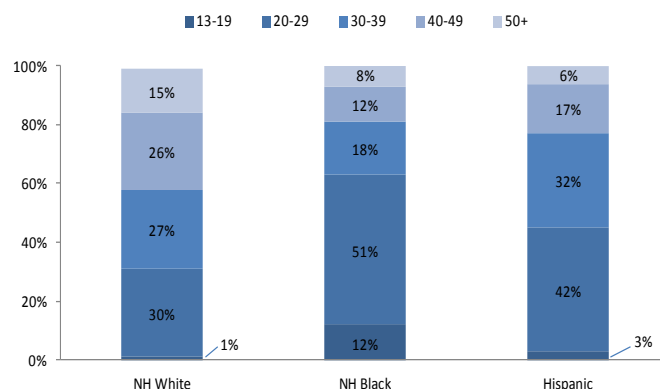


Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### Age at Diagnosis and Race/Ethnicity

NH black MSM were more likely to be diagnosed at an earlier age than either Hispanic or NH white MSM. Among NH black MSM, 63% were diagnosed with HIV before age 30, compared to 45% of Hispanic MSM and 31% of NH white MSM. Higher HIV diagnosis rates among young, NH black MSM have also been found nationally (CDC, 2014a). Although the reasons for this disparity are not fully understood, possible factors include inadequate prevention education; limited awareness of infection; low perception of risk; alcohol and illegal drug use; and feelings of rejection and isolation due to bullying, harassment, or family disapproval (CDC, 2014c).

**Figure 5. HIV Disease Diagnoses among MSM by Age at Diagnosis and Race/Ethnicity, Illinois, 2009–2013**



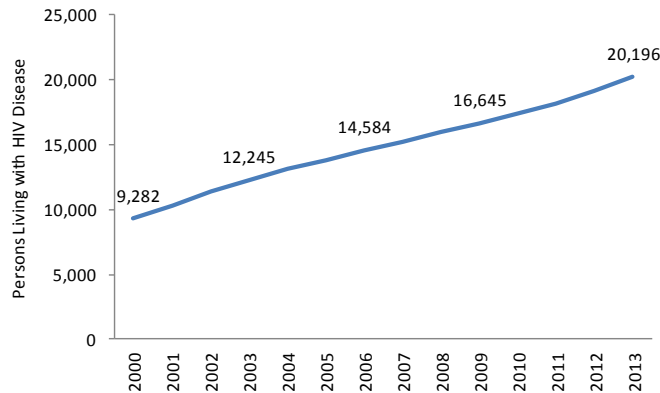
Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### Persons Living with HIV Disease

Determining the overall prevalence of HIV infection among MSM is difficult. One study conducted in 20 U.S. metropolitan statistical areas with the largest burden of AIDS found that 18% of MSM in the study were HIV positive (Wejnert et al., 2013). Prevalence rates were highest among MSM ≥40 years (26%) and among NH black MSM of all ages (30%) (Wejnert et al., 2013).

The number of MSM living with HIV disease in Illinois has more than doubled since 2000. This increase reflects ongoing transmission of HIV in this population, as well as improved life expectancy of individuals diagnosed with HIV disease due to improved care and treatment options. MSM accounted for 56% of all persons living with HIV disease in Illinois at the end of 2013.

**Figure 6. MSM Living with HIV Disease by Year, Illinois, 2000–2013**

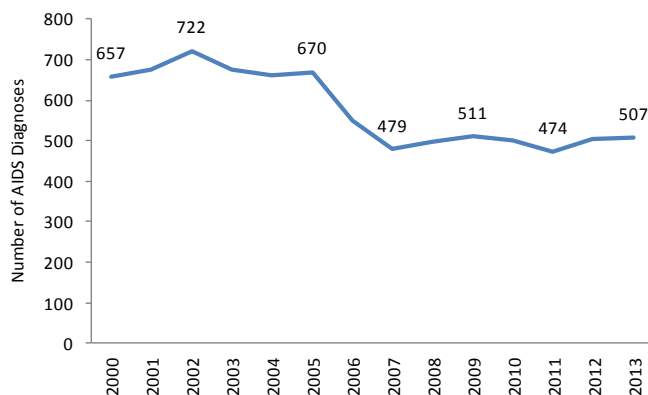


Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### AIDS Diagnoses

Among Illinois MSM, the number of AIDS diagnoses, or persons infected with HIV that has progressed to AIDS, decreased slightly from 2000–2013. Although there was annual variability, an overall downward trend in AIDS diagnoses among MSM occurred over this time period even as the number of MSM living with HIV increased (Figure 6).

**Figure 7. AIDS Diagnoses among MSM by Year of Diagnosis, Illinois, 2000–2013**

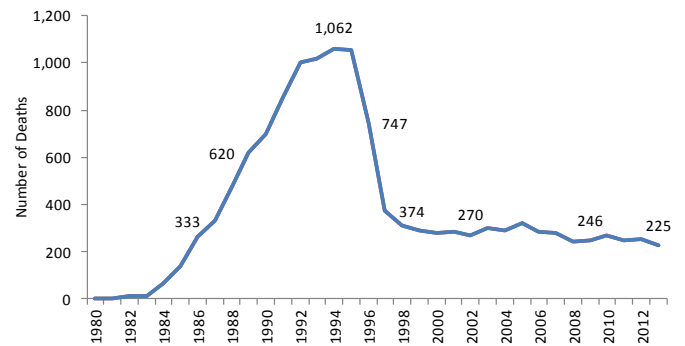


Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, June, 2014

### Mortality

Despite the increased number of MSM living with HIV in Illinois, the number of deaths among MSM has declined since the peak in 1994 when 1,062 MSM living with HIV disease died. In 2013, according to preliminary estimates, 225 deaths occurred among MSM living with HIV disease in Illinois.

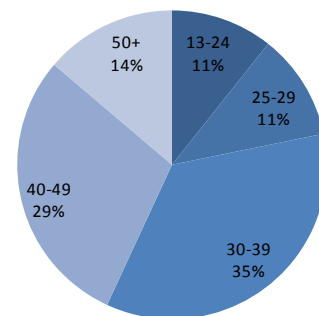
**Figure 8. Deaths among MSM Living with HIV Disease by Year of Death, Illinois, 1980–2013**



Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, April, 2015

In 2013, the majority of deaths among Illinois MSM living with HIV disease were among men aged  $\geq 30$  years. However, 49 deaths or 22% of all deaths among MSM living with HIV disease were among those aged  $\leq 30$  years.

**Figure 9. Deaths among MSM with Diagnosed HIV Disease by Age at Death, Illinois, 2013**



Source: Illinois Department of Public Health, April, 2015

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